

THE REHEARSAL.

1. *Objection*, That Asserting the *Independency* of the Church in *Spirituals*, Savours of *Popery*.
2. *Presbytery* was *Erastian* from its *Birth*.
3. *Popery* likewise *Erastian*. And gave us the *Act* of *Submission* of the *Clergy*.
4. The Book call'd *The Rights of the Christian Church* takes its *Rise* from that. And is *Popery* at the *Bottom*.
5. A *short Account* of it. And its *Foundation* overthrown.
6. A *particular Answer* to the *Preface* of it.
7. It *Confounds* the *Constitution* of the Church, and her *Legal Establishment*.

SATURDAY, December 14. 1706.

(1.) *Country-man*. THEY say, *Master*, that the *Independency* of the Church, as to her *Spiritual Power*, which the *Bishops* and *Clergy* in *Scotland* so *Strongly Asserted*, and in which they *Prevail'd*, is a *Spice of Popery*.

Rehearsal. Who says so? None but they who want *Shame*, or *Understanding*. *Popery* is an *Ill Word*. And when some Men want *Argument* against any *Truth*, they *Throw Popery* at it. Tho' without *Rhime* or *Reason*. And think that enough to *Blast* it, if it were an *Article of the Creed*. But this makes against *Popery*, as I shall shew you. And *Popery* has favour'd *Erastianism*. Yet speaks against it.

(2.) The *Presbyterians* in *Scotland* (as I told you) *Object Erastianism* against the *Bishops* and *Clergy* there, who have been the *Noblest* and *Boledest ASSERTORS* of the *Rights* of the Church, that any *Later Age* can *Produce*. And these *Presbyterians* *Object* it, who *Themselves Yield* to what they *Call Erastianism* in the *State*, and make *Use* of it against the *Episcopal Clergy* there at this *Day*. And was not *Episcopacy* *Abolish'd* there, and *Presbytery* *Establish'd*, in the *Beginning* of this *Revolution*, by a *meer Lay-Authority*? Was ther so much as one *Spiritual Person* in that *Parliament* which made this *Change* in the *Church Government* there?

The *Presbyterians* *Cannot* say but they are *Gainers* by *Erastianism*, how much soever they *Hate* it! Let them shew that *Country* or *Place* in the *World* where ever *Presbytery* *Enter'd* but by *Erastianism*, by *Lay-Power* and *Authority*, by *Lay-Cannon*, *Swords*, and *Muskets*!

And if *Presbytery* was *Conceiv'd* in the *Womb* of *Erastianism*, has *Suck'd* its *Milk*, and is still *Nourish'd* by it; how *Decently* do's it look to see the *Presbyterians* *Rail* at it, and *Abjure* it? Are they *Sworn* to *Destroy* that which first gave them *Birth*? They have *Constantly Practis'd* it. They have made their way to *Life* (like the *Viper*.)

by the *Death* of their *Mother*. As if that were a *Just Judgment* upon those who shou'd bring such *Poyson* into the *World*.

(3.) *Country-m*. But, *Master*, is ther no *Erastianism* in *Popery*?

Rehearsal. All we have of it came from *Thence*. When the *Pope* began to *Engross* the whole *Episcopal Power* into his own hands, he took *Aid* of the *Temporal Princes*, and *Shar'd* the *Spoils* of the Church with them, to *Support* his own *Usurpation*. He *Sold* the *Tythes* of *God* to them, as *Grand Treasurer* of the Church, to make all other *Bishops* and *Clergy* *Depend* wholly upon him. He gave *Princes* the *Nomination* to such and such *Bishopricks*, that he might surely keep the *Rest* to himself. As the *Learned Dr. Burnet*, now *Bishop* of *Sarum*, says very well in his *History of the Regale* p. 241. *The King and the Pope agreed to Divide the Promotions to all Prelacies between them*.

And thus it is at this *Day* in *France*, *Spain*, and other *Popish Countries*, the *Princes* do *Nominate* to *Bishopricks*, and other *Ecclesiastical Preferments*, according to the *Concordats* and *Agreements* made by the *Pope* with them. Yet they *object* to us, our *Kings* *Naming* to *Bishopricks* and other *Ecclesiastical Dignities* in *England*. Tho' that was done by our *Kings* before the *Reformation*.

And it was before the *Reformation* that the *Submission* of the *Clergy* was made 25 *Hen. VIII.* c. 19. which has *Occasion'd* so many *Disputes* since. But be that what it will, the Church of *Rome* has no *Pretence* to *Charge* it upon *Us*, they must *Answer* for it themselves. Nor can they *object* this *Act* of *Submission* against *Us*, unless they will say, That we are not *Reform'd* far enough yet from *Popery*.

(4.) *Country-m*. But *The Rights of the Christian Church*, &c. (of which you have taken some *Notice* already) lays the main stress upon this *Act* of *Submission*, and other *Acts* of *Parliament* made after the *Reformation*, which were all *Grounded* upon this *Act* of *Sub-*

Submission, and *Infer'd* from it. Whence he Argues that we have no Church, Priesthood, or Sacraments.

Rehears. He means since the Reformation. By which he wou'd lead us back again to Popery. But if all this can be *Infer'd* from the *Act of Submission*, That it leaves us neither Church, Priesthood, nor Sacraments, it must be charg'd back again upon Popery; since that Convocation which made it, and the King and Parliament which pass'd it into a Law, were then all Papists. For it was before even the Beginning of the Reformation.

Country-m. O, Master, he speaks mightily against Popery too.

Rehears. That is a common Blind. But if he cou'd perswade us, That there is no Church or Priesthood in the Reformation, the natural Consequence wou'd be, That Men wou'd run back again to Popery. Since all People will have some Church and Religion or other, be it True or False. And no Nation of Men can be Perswaded out of it. Whatever particular Atheists or Deists there may be.

And no Emissary of Rome cou'd set up a Topick more Beneficial to Popery in England at this Day, than what is Advanc'd in this Book of the Rights.

And it is the more Suspicious, That the Reputed Author (and who I hear does not much deny it) turn'd Papist and went to Mass in K. James's time; but Return'd since with the Fashion.

Country-m. That is a shrewd Suspicion indeed! But, Master, Let him be a Papist in Maskerade, or if, by his Playing Fast and Loose with his Religion, he has Lost it, and Argu'd himself into an Atheist, or whatever he be, yet let us consider his Arguments, for this Book is mightily Cry'd up, and Boasted of as Unanswerable. And there are many Men wou'd fain have no Church or Religion at all. And these Hugg this Book, as fully Answering their Designs.

(5.) *Rehears.* To give you the main of this Book, in one word, it is this. That the Church has no Authority but from the State, nor the State but from the People. This is the whole Scope and Drift of this Book. And which if he cou'd Prove, it wou'd indeed Effectually Overthrow all Church and Religion whatsoever, since it is impossible these cou'd be True, if they had no Deeper a Foundation than what the People cou'd give them.

It wou'd likewise Un-hing all the Civil Governments in the World, by Placing them upon the Foundation of Mob, as I have shew'd before Num. 136. And that his Notion of the Original of Government coming not from the Power that any Man had to Dispose of Himself, but from the Right he had to Dispose of the Lives and Fortunes of all other Men, for his own Preservation, was much more Ridiculous than the former Scheme of giving every Man leave to Dispose of Himself. And that it Solv'd none of the Difficulties which attended the former Scheme, but made them Greater, and more Absurd.

And having thus fairly Overthrown his whole Foundation, upon which all his Book

is Built, it may justly pass for a full Answer to all his Book. But I will go through some other Particulars, to shew you the Method of Management, as well as the Principles that are set forth in this Book.

(6.) He spends his long Preface upon the English Reformation. He lays the *Act of Submission* as the Foundation, and Quotes as many Acts of Parliament as he can in Confirmation and Improvement of it. And this he calls the Constitution of the Church of England, as by Law Established. And Disputes against two Independent Powers in the same Kingdom. He makes long Quotations out of a Book call'd, *The Case of the Regale &c.* But Answers not One of them. And I Appeal to every Reader, whether the Case be not rather an Answer to the Rights, than the Rights to the Case?

He says nothing to Sect. iv. of the Case, where his Objection of *Imperium in Imperio*, or two Independent Powers, is fully Answer'd.

He overlooks Sect. ix. Concerning our LAWS at present, and since the Reformation. And Sect. xxi. where it is shew'd in Nine Instances, how far we have Reform'd from our first Reformation. And therefore that All of it, is not to be Charg'd upon us at this Day.

Therefor let Men cease to Admire this Book of the Rights, till he has given some Answer or other to these things which he Pretends to Answer: Otherwise all he says is Trifeling, he Repeats Objections that have been already Answer'd in the same Book which he Quotes,

(7.) Then he Confounds the Constitution of the Church, and her Establishment by Law. The Establishment by Law may be Alter'd, or Taken away, as of Episcopacy in Scotland. But the Constitution of the Church she must Receive from her Founder. And is the Same in all Churches. And for that, whether shall we take the Submission of a Popish Convocation, lying under the Harrows of a Premunire; or of a Protestant Church of Bishops and Clergy, stoutly Asserting the Rights of the Christian Church, although they were then under the like Penalty; and who Prevail'd to Get them fully Recogniz'd by a Protestant King and Government?

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